

JSOST RSMAS Briefing
Summary of comments and questions
Miami, FL
August 24, 2006

1. There was some confusion about the Ocean Action Plan governance structure, including the role and functions of such groups as the ICOSRMI, SIMOR, etc.
2. Ocean issues are international issues. How does the ORPP relate to other countries' activities?
 - One of the prioritization criteria asks if something contributes to a greater understanding of ocean issues at a global scale.
 - The State Department has been an active participant in the development process for the ORPP.
 - One of the challenges is to discriminate between research issues and policy issues.
 - The international community has not been specifically surveyed, but they are welcome to participate in the public comment period.
3. What will the process be to order the 21 priorities?
 - OSTP initially asked the same thing: why not have one single priority? The difficulty is that the ocean community is so diverse.
 - The near-term opportunities narrow the list to four or five priorities.
 - There has been a lot of resistance to choosing among the six societal themes.
4. Why was feasibility not included in the eight prioritization criteria?
 - It was included in the criteria for the near-term opportunities.
 - We did not want to constrain ourselves to what we can do right now. There was a lot of discussion about this.
5. If at some point, pieces of the ORPP get funded, who decides what parts receive money?
 - The near-term opportunities have costs associated with them.
 - Will it materialize? The JSOST hopes the Administration will ask the agencies to come in with budgets for this. That is the message from OMB.
6. The ORPP is a process document. The Florida Oceans and Coastal Research Council came with a plan and a budget. The Governor vetoed it. Are you looking for conflicts and how will you deal with changes in Administration?
 - The ORPP is not Administration-specific.
 - The Federal process is different than the state process because the cabinet-level Committee on Ocean Policy is the final signatory to the ORPP, which is Administration approval.
 - Changes in Administration should be able to be accommodated.
 - The agencies have so much in common. There have actually been few conflicts. This has been an opportunity to strengthen links between agencies.
7. How will the various agencies respond to the ORPP? How will NOAA respond?

- All of the agencies have been participating in the process and have brought into the process.
 - Would like to see NOAA require research planners to identify connections to the ORPP in planning their budgets.
8. There was concern that societal benefits can have many definitions.
- Quality of Life is expressed as protecting lives, enhancing livelihoods, and improving the quality of life to capture as much of that as possible.
9. Many things, such as ocean exploration, appear to be missing from the ORPP.
- The ORPP will not be all things to all people, but the public comment period is an opportunity to make sure that important things are not missing.
10. The next task is the Implementation Strategy. Can you give us any further insight into aspects of it?
- The Implementation Strategy will be a Federal document. We cannot tell the states how to implement the ORPP.
 - The Implementation Strategy should state, on some level, “All Federal agencies should reference the ORPP in their budgets.” Getting more than twenty agencies to do that is a challenge.
 - The Implementation Strategy should have elements of accountability.